

## WHAT IS GOD'S DUE—Luke 20:19-26

Topic, April 29

The ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun and represented each ray as being terminated by a hand spread out to pour blessings on men.

The conception is beautiful in a way, as teaching the beneficence of God, but it is only a partial conception, yet it represents that of a great many people today. They do not meditate much on the love of God or on the many ways in which his goodness is shown, they only want the loaves and fishes and they act as if the only function the Lord has is to supply such things. Ten lepers are cleansed but the nine return not to give thanks. The sun shines on the just and on the unjust but the many receive the sunshine as a matter of course and only remember their Creator to curse him when it hails.

But God never made man in the image of the dead sea which drinks in the river of blessing forever and gives nothing back; he has made man in his own image that the calling of his compassionate voice might find its echo "Here am I," that the sunshine of his love might warm into being a kindred love in the human heart, that the hands outspread to bless might cover other hands uplifted to praise and to serve.

Under the old covenant Israel was taught that everything belonged to God and that man should give a tenth in recognition of this ownership. Under the new covenant the world is taught still that everything belongs to the Heavenly Father, but he has made stewards of men and of them he will require, not a tenth merely, but a consecrated use of all. This means more than paying one's share for current church expenses.

*Giving is not an act of paying expenses for church or charity but is an act of worship.* It should be observed regularly whether needed for current expenses or not, just exactly as one day in seven should be kept holy whether there be preaching or not. I Cor. 16:2 may have been given for a special occasion but it represents the spirit of the New Testament standard and can well be adopted as a general rule for giving.

The subject is large and only a phase of it can be covered in one hour of study but if by this lesson we see clearly what really is God's due a great work shall have been accomplished.

## SCRIPTURE LIGHT

1 All is the Lord's. Matt. 25:14; I Chron. 29:11; Ez. 18:4; Hag. 2:8. In these references and in those which are to follow, let it be remembered that we are considering not only money but time and ability as well. The word "talent" includes all this.

2 The responsibility of each person differs according to ability. Matt. 25:15; Luke 12:47, 48.

3 But each person is to consecrate ALL to the Lord, that is use time, talent and money in the way which will do the most good. In deciding what is best we must be guided by the word, the Spirit and by common sense. Matt. 25:27; Rom. 12:1; I Cor. 6:20.

4 This implies the caring for one's own. I Tim. 5:8; Luke 10:7.

5 The tenth was required under the old covenant. Lev. 27:30, and is inferentially endorsed under the new. Matt. 23:23; I Cor. 9:13, 14.

6 For some the tenth may be too much but for most it is too little. The better rule is that of I Cor. 16:2.

7 God looks upon, not the amount of dues given, but upon the spirit of the giver. II Cor. 8:12.

8 He does not compel but expects faithfulness and on this basis every steward will be judged. I Cor. 4:2; Luke 19:15, 24; Rev. 22:12.

9 This judgment will come both to those who profess to serve God and to those who serve him not. Matt. 25:14; Luke 19:14, and 27.

10 The true Christian will rise above all rules and guide his life by the principle which Jesus followed. John 17:10.

## QUESTIONS

1 Why do we owe God anything?

- 2 Can we give to God all that we owe?
- 3 What does God seek from us first of all?
- 4 Is it hard or easy to consecrate all to the Lord? Why?
- 5 How may we know when we are doing all that is required of us?
- 6 Does love count how much is given or simply ask "Can I give more?"
- 7 Do we have a Bible rule as to how we shall give? What is it?
- 8 What is a steward and how are we stewards of God?
- 9 What will happen if we use for self what should be used in a consecrated way?
- 10 How can our society raise the standard of its giving?

C. F. YODER.

## The Legend of the Lilies

Forward.

There is a legend, that when Jesus arose from his grave and walked out of Joseph's garden, white lilies blossomed in his footsteps, so that wherever he went, bloom and beauty sprang up. The legend faintly illustrates what was true of him all his days on earth. Blessings followed in his footsteps. The sick were healed, discouraged ones were cheered, sorrowing ones were comforted, and the weary received inspiration and strength from his words.

In our lesser degree, because of the littleness of our lives, all of us may continually perform a wayside ministry as we go along on our purposed errands for God. We have our allotted tasks for the day, and these are enough to fill our hands. But this need not make machines of us. We have human hearts and while we are busy, with not a moment to lose, our sympathy and love may be flowing out to all whom we meet or touch. We may be kind to our fellows who are working beside us. We may be thoughtful in speech. Our face may carry in it a benediction for every one who passes. Our merest handshake and cheerful "Good Morning" may be full of God's hearty love, and may send those whom we salute to a brighter, braver, happier day.

## Consecrated

Dear Lord I take  
Thy cross and make  
Thy life my guide  
To self I'm dead  
From sin I've fled  
And by thy side  
In faith and love,  
And works to prove  
I will abide.

Do thou for me  
Unceasingly  
My wants supply.  
Thy spirit give  
And help me live  
With single eye.  
And teach me still  
To do thy will  
Until I die.

—C. F. Yoder.

## NEW THINGS

J. R. MILLER

The calendar's time of beginning is January, but nature's new year commences in spring. It is then that the resurrection miracle is repeated. The tomb of the winter death is riven and earth's new life arises vic-

torious, to run again the year's swift course of youth, maturity, age and death.

Easter is the time of new things. Whether young or old, rich or poor, each of us strives to appear in some new garment at this season of beautiful beginnings. The new fashions make their advent at Easter. Nor is this to be criticised, for it is a tribute to the day's central teaching of the putting on of a new life. The new bonnets and hats and wraps and clothing that appear at Eastertide are mere outward tokens, not always understood, but tokens nevertheless, of the glory that was purchased for us on the first Easter.

Old things should be put away as we get into the spirit of this commemoration time. Easter stands for newness and victory. We can best observe it by rising triumphant from the graves of selfishness, narrowness, pride and unloveliness. There is no more beautiful offering that we can bring Christ at this resurrection season than a new spirit of humility and unselfishness. He rejoices most to see his children become new creatures—so new that his own image is reflected in their lives.

May we not celebrate this Easter by a deep purpose to leave behind some of the old things of life and to achieve some new grace in the Savior's sight? What a glorious Easter this would be for all of us, if, in the strength that the Redeemer surely will supply, we should begin to practice more of the Christly deeds in our daily lives! Think of the malice that would be put away, of the jealousy and worry that would die, of the complaining and self-seeking spirit that would be left behind in the old grave from which we are bidden to arise.

The fundamental thought of Easter is that of newness. "Old things are passed away" for us, and "all things are become new." For "if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." Therefore, "if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

## SERMON ECHOES

LOUIS S. BAUMAN

They that serve, shall reign.

Success has no secret—joy on!

All God's is yours, when all yours is God's.

Don't be hasty. It pays to wait on God.

Don't worry about the devil before you meet him.

Better let your hat match your pocketbook than your dress.

Better stay single and settle up, before you settle down.

As God's birds love the valley, so God's angels love the lowly.

Self-denial is not giving, simply, but giving until you feel it.

A business that won't help you to glorify God, had better be given up.

If you want to be missed when you die, quit living